

Amherst Town Council Priorities

For the January 1, 2013-December 31, 2014 Term

Per the January 19, 2013 Retreat

1. Develop and implement a plan to improve the Town Hall and Police Department office spaces.

- Space needs for the Town's office staff, police department and meeting rooms, opportunities for other compatible uses such as farmers markets, potential locations, costs, funding mechanisms and other items will be evaluated and then acted upon once a plan is in place.
 - The Town Council will act as a committee of the whole to accomplish this priority. It is acknowledged that consulting assistance may be needed to guide the process, verify space needs, evaluate candidate locations, and generate cost estimates.

2. Improve the Town's identity.

- The Town will begin promoting the fact that the Town of Amherst is a good place to live and visit. This will be accomplished by highlighting the Town's good features such as
 - Excellent restaurants
 - Low tax rates
 - Low crime
 - A landmark traffic circle and one stoplight that adequately manages low traffic
 - Sweet Briar College
 - Proximity to Appomattox, Charlottesville and Lexington
 - Urban art
- Promotional channels might include:
 - Encouraging and sponsoring more downtown events
 - Creating brochures and/or maps
 - Implementing web site improvements that might include new content
 - Investigating Facebook, Twitter and Apps opportunities
 - Advertising in various publications and/or press releases
 - Writing and distributing a Town newsletter

3. Demonstrate that the Town is business-friendly.

- The Town will support a variety of initiatives and efforts that will make new and existing businesses feel welcome. Ideas that will be pursued include:
 - Increase business traffic throughout the Town and downtown in particular
 - Explore zoning and permit process changes to eliminate unnecessarily restrictive regulations and procedures such as parking space requirements
 - Develop mechanisms where potential business operators are provided with better information on how to start a business
 - Commissioning market surveys that provide appropriate statistics and talking points for use by the Town and the real estate promotion community
 - Providing a clearinghouse on available business space
 - Promoting specific classes of businesses (such as medical providers, restaurants or a motel) or drawing business off U.S. Route 29 Bypass.

4. Continue the effort to improve utility systems by replacing aging water and sewer pipes and providing service into heretofore unserved and underserved areas of the Town.

- Complete a professionally prepared utility rate study to determine how best to generate revenue to fund the needed construction program
- Install a new water main to serve Ambriar Shopping Center, to be funded with General Fund monies